

The invention claimed is:

1. A pedal lever assembly for a motor vehicle having a body structure defining a passenger compartment in which the pedal lever assembly is mounted, the lever assembly comprising a primary lever, a secondary lever and a releasable latching means to selectively fasten an upper end of the primary lever to the secondary lever, the primary lever being adapted at a lower end for movement by an operator between a rest position and an activated position and the secondary lever being pivotally connected at an upper end to part of the body structure of the motor vehicle and pivotally connected at a lower end to the primary lever and is adapted for connection to a device to be operated by the pedal lever assembly at a position between its upper and lower ends wherein the latching means is moveable between a first position in which the primary and secondary levers are fastened together so as to function as a single lever and a second position in which the primary lever is free to rotate relative to the secondary lever.
2. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 1 in which the releasable latching means is moved from said first position to said second position by contact between part of the latching means and an adjacent part of the body structure of the motor vehicle.
3. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 1 in which the secondary lever is attached at its upper end to a pivot rod used to pivotally connect the secondary lever to the body structure of the motor vehicle.
4. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 3 in which the latching means has an abutment surface for engagement with the upper end of the primary lever and at least one aperture to pivotally connect the latching means to the upper end of the secondary lever.

5. The pedal lever as claimed in claim 4 in which the at least one aperture in the latching means is arranged for engagement with the pivot rod so as to pivotally connect the latching means to the secondary lever.

6. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 4 in which rotation of the latching means relative to the secondary lever from the first position to the second position moves the abutment surface out of engagement with the primary lever so as to allow the primary lever to rotate relative to the secondary lever.

7. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 4 in which the at least one aperture is an elongate aperture.

8. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 7 in which the movement from said first position to said second position comprises both rotation relative to the secondary lever and sliding movement of the latching means relative to the pivot pin.

9. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 3 in which the latching means comprises a U-shaped member having two arms connected by a bridging portion having an inner surface forming the abutment surface, one arm having an aperture formed therein for engagement with the pivot rod on one side of the secondary lever and the other arm having an aperture formed therein for engagement with the pivot rod on an opposite side of the secondary lever so as to sandwich the primary and secondary levers between the two arms.

10. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 9 in which when the latching means is in its first position the upper end of the primary lever is interposed between the bridging portion of the U-shaped member and a longitudinal edge of the secondary lever.

11. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 9 in which each of the apertures is an elongate aperture.

12. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 11 in which each of the elongate apertures is arranged to extend substantially parallel to the abutment surface.

13. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 9 in which each of the arms has a hand portion extending therefrom for selective abutment with an adjacent part of the body structure of the motor vehicle.

14. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 1 in which one of the primary lever and the secondary lever is formed by a U-shaped channel member which is sufficiently wide to be engaged over the other of the secondary lever and the primary lever.

15. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 1 in which one of the primary lever and the secondary lever is a flat strip like member.

16. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 1 in which the secondary lever is pivotally connected to the primary lever by a pivot pin engaged with respective apertures in the primary and secondary levers.

17. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 1 in which the secondary lever is adapted for connection to a device to be operated by the pedal lever assembly by means of an aperture formed therein for co-operation with a pin used to connect the secondary lever to an input member of the device to be operated.

18. The pedal lever assembly as claimed in claim 1 in which the device to be operated is one of a brake servo, a brake hydraulic master cylinder, a clutch hydraulic master cylinder or an engine throttle control.

19. A motor vehicle having a body structure defining a passenger compartment and an engine compartment, the motor vehicle further having a pedal lever assembly mounted substantially within the passenger compartment, the lever

assembly comprising a primary lever, a secondary lever and a releasable latching means to selectively fasten an upper end of the primary lever to the secondary lever, the primary lever being adapted at a lower end for movement by an operator between a rest position and an activated position and the secondary lever being pivotally connected at an upper end to part of the body structure of the motor vehicle and pivotally connected at a lower end to the primary lever and is adapted for connection to a device to be operated by the pedal lever assembly at a position between its upper and lower ends wherein the latching means is moveable between a first position in which the primary and secondary levers are fastened together so as to function as a single lever and a second position in which the primary lever is free to rotate relative to the secondary lever.

20. The motor vehicle as claimed in claim 19 in which the latching means is releasable when the pedal lever assembly is moved rearwardly by deformation of the body structure due to an impact at a front of the motor vehicle.

21. The motor vehicle as claimed in claim 20 in which the deformation of the body structure causes the latching means to be moved into contact with a part of the body structure of the motor vehicle thereby moving the latching means into its second position.

22. The motor vehicle as claimed in claim 19 further comprising a fluid pressure generating device mounted in the engine compartment, the fluid pressure generating device having an input member extending through a wall separating the engine compartment from the passenger compartment to link the pedal lever assembly to the fluid pressure generating device.

23. A pedal lever assembly for a motor vehicle having a primary lever adapted at a lower end for movement by an operator between a rest position and an activated position and having an upper end releasably attached to a pivot means

by a releasable latching means, the primary lever being adapted at a position between its upper and lower ends for connection to a device to be operated by the pedal lever assembly wherein the latching means is moveable between a first position in which the primary lever is fastened to the pivot means so as to permit pivotal movement of the primary lever at its upper end about the pivot means and a second position in which the primary lever is free to rotate about a position interposed between its upper and lower ends.